

# SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

104th Congress  
2nd Session

Vote No. 164

June 19, 1996, 7:59 p.m.  
Page S-6478 Temp. Record

## DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION/Projects not Requested by the President

**SUBJECT:** National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 1997 . . . S. 1745. Reid motion to table the McCain/Glenn amendment No. 4060.

### ACTION: MOTION TO TABLE AGREED TO, 83-13

**SYNOPSIS:** As reported, S. 1745, the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 1997, will authorize a total of \$267.3 billion in budget authority for national defense programs (the President requested \$254.3 billion). In real terms, this bill will authorize \$5.6 billion less, and the President requested \$18.6 billion less, than was provided in fiscal year (FY) 1996.

**The McCain/Glenn amendment** would reduce the amount authorized for military construction projects by \$598.8 million, with the intention of eliminating the authorizations in this bill for 115 military construction and family housing projects that the Clinton Administration did not request. Most of those projects are for National Guard and Reserve projects. The total amount this bill will authorize for National Guard and Reserve projects is \$368 million; the Administration requested only \$7 million for the Army Guard and Reserve. In total, the Clinton Administration proposed cutting the military construction budget by \$1.5 billion.

Debate was limited by unanimous consent. Following debate, Senator Reid moved to table the McCain amendment. Generally, those favoring the motion to table opposed the amendment; those opposing the motion to table favored the amendment.

**Those favoring** the motion to table contended:

Every year Senator McCain complains about funding for military construction projects. In prior years he has noted, correctly, that low-priority projects have received funding, and has suggested that only projects that meet certain criteria should be funded. We have taken that suggestion in this bill. The additional projects in this bill all meet the McCain criteria. They are in the Defense Department's future years defense plan, construction can begin in FY 1997, they are all mission-essential or meet a quality of life need, they are consistent with base closure actions, and they are within the Committee's budget. Some Senators have suggested that 14 of the 115 projects do not meet the future year's defense plan criterion. They are wrong. The authorizations for those 14 projects

(See other side)

YEAS (83)				NAYS (13)		NOT VOTING (4)	
Republican (48 or 94%)		Democrats (35 or 78%)		Republicans (3 or 6%)	Democrats (10 or 22%)	Republicans (2)	Democrats (2)
Abraham	Hutchison	Akaka	Inouye	Brown	Bingaman	D'Amato- <sup>2</sup>	Bumpers- <sup>2</sup>
Ashcroft	Inhofe	Baucus	Johnston	Kyl	Bradley	Grams- <sup>2</sup>	Moseley-Braun- <sup>2</sup>
Bennett	Jeffords	Biden	Kennedy	McCain	Feingold		
Bond	Kassebaum	Boxer	Kerry		Glenn		
Burns	Kempthorne	Breaux	Lautenberg		Harkin		
Campbell	Lott	Bryan	Leahy		Kerrey		
Chafee	Lugar	Byrd	Levin		Kohl		
Coats	Mack	Conrad	Lieberman		Simon		
Cochran	McConnell	Daschle	Mikulski		Wellstone		
Cohen	Murkowski	Dodd	Moynihan		Wyden		
Coverdell	Nickles	Dorgan	Murray				
Craig	Pressler	Exon	Nunn				
DeWine	Roth	Feinstein	Pell				
Domenici	Santorum	Ford	Pryor				
Faircloth	Shelby	Graham	Reid				
Frahm	Simpson	Heflin	Robb				
Frist	Smith	Hollings	Rockefeller				
Gorton	Snowe		Sarbanes				
Gramm	Specter						
Grassley	Stevens						
Gregg	Thomas						
Hatch	Thompson						
Hatfield	Thurmond						
Helms	Warner						

#### EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:

- 1—Official Business
- 2—Necessarily Absent
- 3—Illness
- 4—Other

#### SYMBOLS:

- AY—Announced Yea
- AN—Announced Nay
- PY—Paired Yea
- PN—Paired Nay

are for planning and design. The Department of Defense does not have a 5-year plan for planning and design projects--it requests a lump sum. Therefore, it is not accurate to say that those 14 projects conflict with Defense Department plans. Other Senators have given us a list of 11 projects that will be authorized by this bill, which are basically military housing projects, that they say the Defense Department has told them are not "mission essential." In response, those projects are all quality-of-life projects and they meet the other McCain criteria; projects need to be mission essential or quality of life projects, not both. The final argument related to the criteria is that some Senators have said that offsets were not provided. This argument does not make any sense. The Committee is within its 602(b) allocation. In total, it will authorize \$1.3 billion, or 10 percent, less than the amount provided last year. We believe these facts show that the Committee has been careful to find offsets.

Why then do our colleagues object? These projects are all meritorious by the very criteria set up by the Senator from Arizona. Their objections boil down to one factor only: the Administration did not request the funding. In total, the Clinton Administration requested \$11.5 billion less than this bill will authorize, with \$500 million of the difference being these construction projects. Of the amount authorized for unrequested projects, \$368 million will be for projects for the National Guard and Reserve. The Administration requested only \$7 million. Every year, the Pentagon refuses to request enough funding for the Guard and Reserve. With the tremendous downsizing of our military forces that has occurred under President Clinton, our country is dependent more than ever on reserve forces. Any large future conflict is going to rely heavily on them. We do not want our reserve forces to be cannon fodder; they need to be properly trained and equipped. If our colleagues, like the Clinton Administration and the Pentagon, are unwilling to provide more than \$7 million, then we think they should propose getting rid of reserve forces altogether. There is nothing new about this problem. Presidents, and the Defense Department, have always overlooked the needs of the National Guard and Reserve, leaving it up to Congress to make certain that those needs are met. We will not shirk that responsibility.

Most of the remainder of the additional unrequested funding is for military construction projects, and most of those projects are at the top of the military's "wish list." As our colleagues are aware, that list was prepared by the Pentagon to let Congress know what its greatest unmet needs were under the Clinton Administration's budget. As we have explained on many previous votes, we will not go along with the Clinton Administration's continued gutting of our military. More funding is needed for procurement, for training, for operation and maintenance, and for housing as well.

Senators were not elected to be rubberstamps for the President and the Defense Department. On every bill, they should exercise their judgment about what is best for the Nation. In the past, the Senator from Arizona had a valid point--in exercising their judgment on military construction projects, Senators should make choices based on criteria that measure the relative national importance of those projects. This bill follows that advice. Instead of declaring victory, though, now some Senators are complaining that we have refused in this bill to slash military construction spending by as much as President Clinton suggested. We have no apologies to offer for that refusal, and urge our colleagues to join us in tabling the McCain amendment.

**Those opposing the motion to table contended:**

For the past several years we have pursued the thankless task of cutting wasteful construction projects from the Defense Authorization bill. This task has not made us popular with our colleagues. However, in this era of rapidly declining defense budgets and increasing use of our military forces it is imperative that we continue our efforts. Since 1990, Congress has added more than \$6 billion to military construction accounts. This bill will add yet \$600 million more. In fairness, the projects that will be funded this year are much more justifiable than projects that have been funded in prior years. For the most part, these projects meet certain criteria that have been set forth by Senator McCain to make sure that they are not wasteful. Eleven of the projects are not "mission essential," 14 of them are not mentioned in the future years defense plan, and none of the 115 projects have identified offsets, but other than that they meet the stated criteria. Still, they cannot be supported.

It is not enough to comply with the letter of the McCain criteria--the spirit needs to be met as well. To put it very bluntly, most military construction projects that have been added by Congress in the past have just happened to be located in the States of members of the Armed Services Committee. Though the projects funded by this bill follow the McCain criteria, again the added projects just happen to fall disproportionately in the States of the Senators who wrote this bill. Of the 115 added projects, 72 of them (which will cost a total of \$350 million) are not planned for until the year 2000 or later, and 29 of those projects are in States that have Senators on the Armed Services Committee.

Some of us who support this amendment believe that the Defense Department is grossly underfunded, while others of us would like to make the deeper cuts that President Clinton has proposed. We agree, though, that any funding that is provided should not be wasted. Adding funding for construction projects that the Defense Department has not requested and does not want to begin for at least another 4 years is a horrible waste of money. The fact that most of those projects are in the home States of Armed Services Committee members indicates strongly that this spending is unjustified, whether it meets the McCain criteria or not. We urge our colleagues not to waste this money; we urge them to support the McCain amendment.